

The Army and Legislative Affairs

Major General Bruce K. Scott, US Army

THE US CONSTITUTION gives the Congress alone “the power...to provide for the common defense...to raise and support Armies...to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces...to declare war...and to make laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying out the foregoing powers.”¹ Congress organizes committees and subcommittees—such as the House Armed Services Committee and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Defense—to carry out this charter.² These committees maintain oversight of and responsibility for annual national defense authorization and appropriations acts.

To better facilitate Congress getting the information it needs, the Army has established the Office of the Chief, Legislative Liaison (OCLL). The chief of legislative legislation, a two-star general officer, is directly responsible to the secretary of the Army (SECARMY) and is responsive to the Army chief of staff (CSA). OCLL provides Army liaison services to the entire Congress, with the exception of the Appropriations and Civil Works committees. Decades ago, Congress required the services to establish separate liaison offices to work with the appropriations committees. In the Army, that budget liaison office (SAFM-BUL) falls under the assistant secretary of the Army for Financial

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Management & Comptroller (FM&C).

In addition to OCLL and SAFM-BUL, there are several other agencies that deal with congressional affairs for the Army. The National Guard Bureau (NGB), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR) and several major commands (MACOMs), such as Army Materiel Command, also have combined policy and liaison offices for legislative liaison functions. Figure 1 illustrates where OCLL fits in the Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) organization. Organizations that have significant legislative affairs responsibilities are outlined in bold.

By regulation, however, OCLL has the responsibility for coordinating all congressional activities for

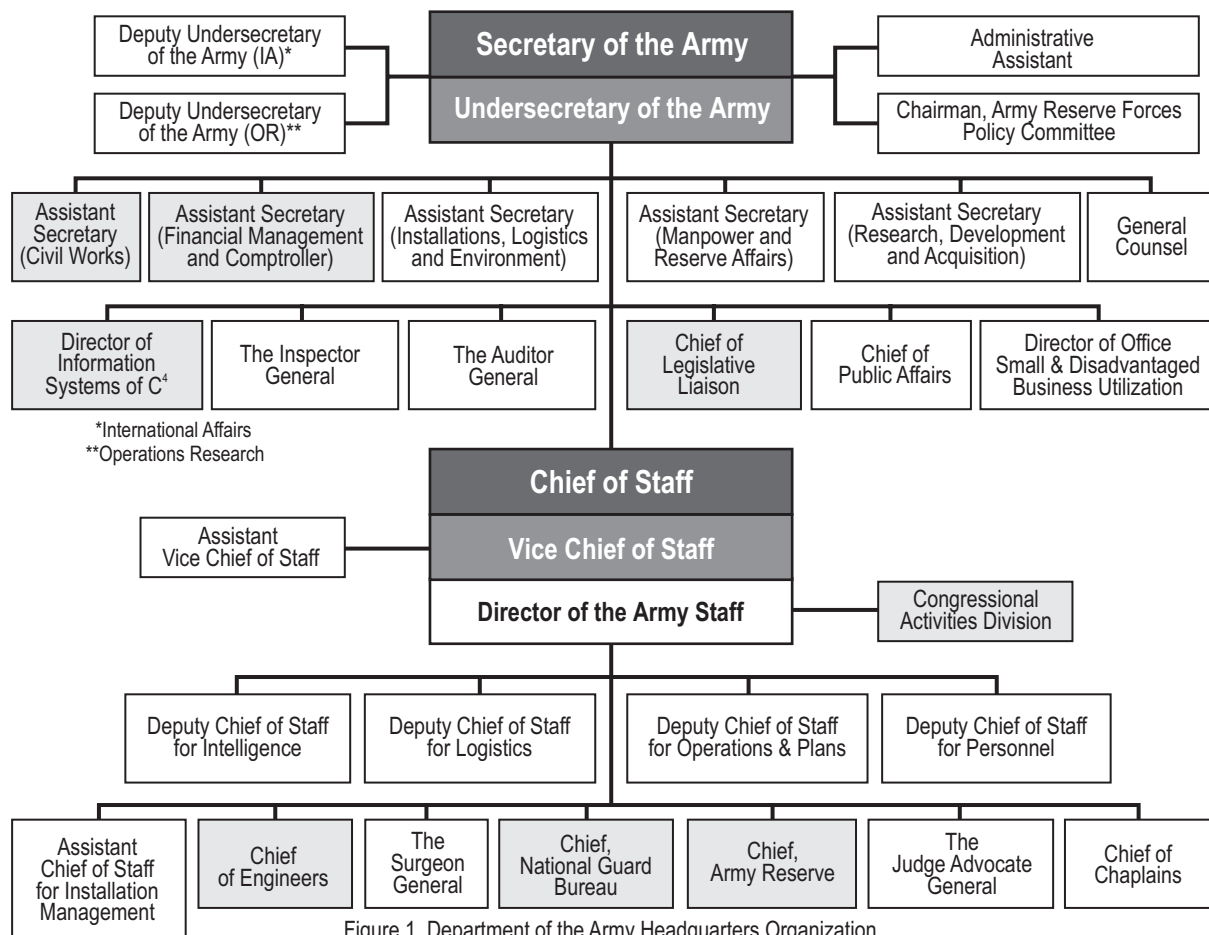


Figure 1. Department of the Army Headquarters Organization.

Effectively “telling the Army story” requires intense coordination and cooperation from throughout the Army. OCLL works closely with staff sections across HQDA and the MACOMs to carry a clear and concise Army message to Congress. . . . The Congressional Activities Division, within the Army Staff, is responsible for developing the Army Posture Statement, which is the Army’s official position delivered to Congress each February. CAD uses a network of congressional activities contact officers throughout the ARSTAF and Secretariat offices, in conjunction with OCLL, to make sure that the Army’s message portrays the unified Army position.

the Army.³ This article will focus on the scope of activities that fall within the OCLL purview. The following is a list of OCLL responsibilities as dictated by the secretary of the Army:

- Formulating, coordinating and supervising policies and programs that impact upon the Army’s

relations with Congress.

- Providing liaison between the Army and committees of Congress (excepting Appropriations, Civil Works and Printing).

- Advising on the status of congressional affairs that affect the Army and on legislative aspects of Army policies, plans and programs.

- Providing prompt, coordinated, consistent and factual information to inquiries received from members, or for congressional reports on legislative and investigative actions of interest to Army witnesses who are called to appear before legislative or investigative committees.

- Administering the US Army Congressional Fellowship Program, which is designed to provide congressional training to selected Army officers and civilians.

Effectively “telling the Army story” requires intense coordination and cooperation from throughout the Army. OCLL works closely with staff sections across HQDA and the MACOMs to carry a clear and concise Army message to Congress. It is truly a team effort. For example, the Congressional Activities Division (CAD), within the Army Staff

(ARSTAF), is responsible for developing the *Army Posture Statement*, which is the Army's official position delivered to Congress each February. CAD uses a network of congressional activities contact officers throughout the ARSTAF and Secretariat offices, in conjunction with OCLL, to make sure that the Army's message portrays the unified Army position. CAD also develops the *Congressional Study Book*, provides read-ahead materials to the SECARMY and CSA for meetings with legislators and coordinates the preparation of their witness statements for testimony. Thus, while OCLL is responsible for coordinating congressional activities, there are many agencies in HQDA and beyond that execute functions for the Army.

OCLL Organization

OCLL comprises several divisions, functionally organized to meet its liaison and support missions, as depicted by Figure 2.

Two divisions, the *House Liaison Division (HLD)* and the *Senate Liaison Division (SLD)*, are physically located on Capitol Hill. These divisions keep in close touch with legislators and assist in providing constituent services as they pertain to the Army. Their mission is to help resolve telephonic inquiries from Senate and House members involving personnel, policy and other Army matters. Additionally, these divisions provide escorts to congressional members and their staffs (normally non-defense committees) while traveling around the world. They also schedule, coordinate and participate in activities and events designed to inform and educate congressional members and their staffs about the Army in general.

The *Congressional Inquiry Division (CID)*, located in the Pentagon, assists members of Congress, their staffs and committees by responding to written inquiries involving policy, constituents and other

Army-related matters. These are the *congressionals* that many of us have experienced in the field. CID answered over 33,000 inquiries in 1998, almost 900 of which were sensitive enough to require a signa-

The Investigations and Legislative Division is charged with processing and coordinating proposed legislation necessary for carrying out HQDA responsibilities and objectives. This division coordinates and reviews legislation that is of interest to the Army and is responsible for the coordination of congressional investigations into Army matters.

ture by the SECARMY or secretary of Defense (SECDEF). CID also is responsible for coordinating special actions for OCLL, including activities such as Tattoos—special parades put on by the Army's Old Guard for members of Congress and other dignitaries.

The *Programs Division* is responsible for providing liaison with the House and Senate Armed Services committees. They are, in essence, the operations section of OCLL. Their organization comprises three branches: policy, hardware and plans and operations. They perform key functions in support of the Army's annual submission of its *Program Objective Memorandum (POM)* to OSD and Congress, which details the Army's projected needs over a six-year planning period. Liaison officers in the Programs Division have a twofold mission—bringing the Army's message to Congress and in turn bringing Congress's message back to the Army. They also monitor congressional activities, attend hearings and escort senior leadership during visits to congressional members or their staffs on Capitol Hill.

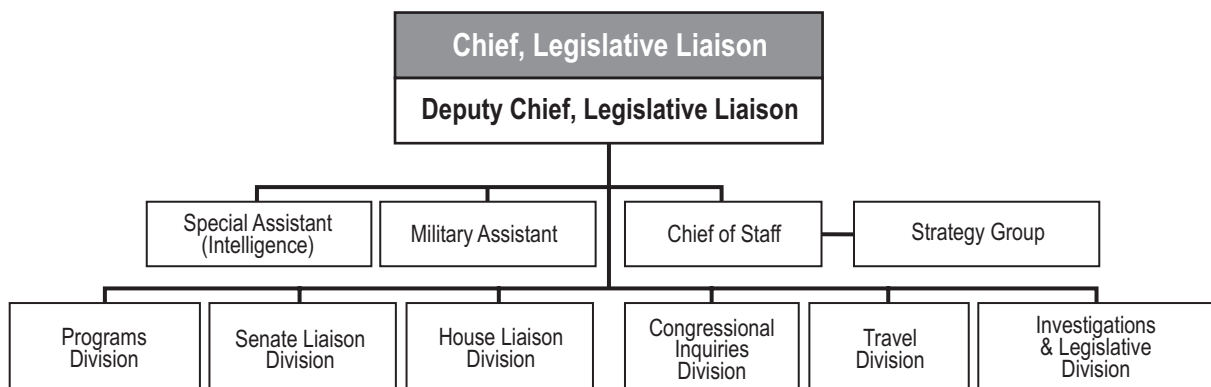


Figure 2. OCLL Organization.

The *Investigations and Legislative Division* (I&LD) is charged with processing and coordinating proposed legislation necessary for carrying out HQDA responsibilities and objectives. This division coordinates and reviews legislation that is of

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interest to the Army and is responsible for the coordination of congressional investigations into Army matters. I&LD also provides legal review, in conjunction with the Army general counsel, and assists in processing nominations for the Army's civilian and military senior leadership. Army lawyers primarily staff this office.

OCLL: Past, Present, Future

Over the past year, we have significantly increased our efforts to inform and educate Congress and tell the Army story. For example, in 1998 we supported over 500 congressional delegations (CODELs). You may have seen or talked with one of these delegations, especially if you were in Bosnia, at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California, or Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana, favorite stops for CODELs. Make no mistake about it; these trips are critical for the Army. Congress often makes decisions based on anecdotal evidence, and trips to the field are critical in this regard. Members of Congress hold in high esteem the opinion of soldiers. Therefore, what you tell them during CODEL visits plays a critical role in influencing national policy.

We also covered over 400 congressional hearings last year, many of which required prepared Army witnesses for testimony. Our organization helps prepare witnesses in a manner similar to the way noncommissioned officers prepare soldiers for promotion boards.

OCLL also prepared over 200 Army individual nominations and promotion lists for Senate confir-

mation, including promotion selection lists that many of our readers were waiting to hear about. Please understand that we do all that we can to ensure that these lists and nominations gain congressional approval as quickly as possible. Additionally, we generated over 10,000 pages of data in response to Freedom of Information Act requests. In short, OCLL has been busy—and we are continuing to push hard in our mission to inform and educate the Congress about our Army.

One recent OCLL initiative, "*Army Days*," a program designed to take young congressional staffers and expose them to the Army through field trips to installations and Civil War battlefields near Washington, D.C., has been particularly successful. In the past several months, more than 300 staffers have participated.⁴ During these *Army Days*, congressional staff members became familiar with the role of the Army in day-to-day activities, from the viewpoint and in the words of actual soldiers. Staffers also operated Army combat vehicles, such as the M1A2 Abrams; fired Army weapons, such as the Squad Automatic Weapon; and have eaten Army food, including meals, ready to eat, T-rations and the HOOAH bar. As several members of Congress point out later in this edition, with the declining rate of military service among staffers likely to continue, this program allows young staffers to experience Army life, even if only briefly. In fact, one staffer, excited about the experience of driving a tank, exclaimed, "I want a photo of that to send out as my Christmas card!"

Opportunities in Congressional Affairs

Each year, Army civilians and mid-level military officers (branch-qualified majors and junior lieutenant colonels) compete to participate in the US Army Congressional Fellowship Program. Those selected begin their fellowship by participating in a HQDA orientation program, beginning in August, followed by an orientation to Congress offered by a sponsoring academic/research institution. In early January, fellows interview with members of Congress, and then ultimately serve on a member's staff for approximately one year.

During their time on Capitol Hill, fellows typically have responsibilities of preparing for congressional hearings and floor debate, writing speeches and floor statements and sometimes drafting legislation. Following their fellowships, they serve a two-year utilization tour in a position that benefits from their Capitol Hill experience. These two-year tours normally occur immediately following the fellowship but must be accomplished within a five-

year period. This program is an outstanding opportunity for officers from the Active Army, Army National Guard, US Army Reserve and Department of the Army civilians (DACs) to become educated and experienced in the congressional process.

In addition to the fellowship, interested individuals can seek assignment with one of the agencies responsible for congressional affairs: OCLL, SAFM-BUL and CAD, or the policy and liaison divisions of USACE, NGB and OCAR. The way to start the process is by contacting your assignment officer at the US Army Personnel Command. Additionally, specific application information can be found on the OCLL website at <<http://webs.hqda.army.pentagon.mil/webs/OCLL>>.

OCLL maintains a Total Army outlook through its mix of assigned personnel—Active Army and Active Guard and Reserve from the US Army Reserve and Army National Guard, and DACs. An assignment with OCLL provides valuable staff experience and is an enriching career progression choice for all four Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) XXI career fields. OCLL provides an opportunity for qualified and motivated individuals to participate in our professional responsibility to inform and educate our Congress about the Army.

The Army has a series of agencies responsible for conducting congressional affairs. OCLL is tasked by the SECARMY to coordinate all activities to ensure that the Army speaks with one voice as it approaches Congress. It is my experience that Congress is very receptive to helping soldiers and their families. It is our job as officers to ensure that Congress understands our resourcing requirements. As we compete with all the other budgetary demands

It is our job as officers to ensure that Congress understands our resourcing requirements. As we compete with all the other budgetary demands that Congress is inundated with every day, we should never lose sight of the fact that soldiers are our best selling point. Seek out opportunities to educate members and staffers on Army issues. When they ask for information, make sure you respond promptly and accurately. Our reputation is on the line, the future of our institution is at stake and we must not let our soldiers down.

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The Army must capitalize on every opportunity to communicate its message to Congress. By proactively informing and educating Congress about our requirements, our relevance to the nation's defense and our daily missions across the spectrum of national and international activities, we obtain the visibility the Army deserves for the myriad missions we perform. Today's Army is more engaged than at any time in its history—and we are proud of our accomplishments. OCLL is actively working to tell the Army's story, and we need the involvement of each and every soldier, Active and Reserve, and civilian to support the process. **MR**

NOTES

1. *US Constitution*, Article 1, Section 8.
2. There are four defense oversight committees that have policy (authorizations) and appropriations jurisdiction. For authorizations, there is the House Armed Services Committee, with subcommittees on Installations and Facilities, Personnel, Procurement, Readiness and Research and Development; and the Senate Armed Services Committee, with subcommittees on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, AirLand Forces, Personnel, Readiness and Management Support, Seapower and Strategic Forces. For appropriations, there is the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, each with subcommittees for Defense and Military Construction. Four other committees that may

impact Department of Defense policies are the Select Committees on Intelligence, for the House and the Senate; the House Committee on International Relations; and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

3. Army Regulation (AR) 1-20, *Legislative Liaison* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 13 August 1990), has detailed information concerning the specifics of DA agencies and their legislative liaison responsibilities.

4. In Fiscal Year 1999, *Army Days* have occurred or are scheduled for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland; Forts Myer, Virginia; A.P. Hill, Virginia; Detrick, Maryland; Belvoir, Virginia; Antietam, Maryland; the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.; and Capitol Hill.

Major General Bruce K. Scott is the chief of Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Army. He is a graduate of the US Military Academy and is an Olmsted Scholar and received a master's equivalent in International Relations from the Universität Freiburg, Germany. He also holds an M.P.A. from Harvard University. He is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College and the Army War College. He has served in numerous assignments in Infantry and Armored divisions in the Continental United States and Germany. He has commanded at the company, battalion and brigade levels and served as the commander and division engineer, South Pacific Division, US Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco, California. Other assignments include deputy director of Strategy, Plans and Policy, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, the Pentagon; White House fellow as special assistant to Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole; military assistant to the executive secretary for the secretary of Defense; aide-de-camp/executive assistant to the commander, V Corps, US Army Europe and Seventh Army; and executive assistant to the vice chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.